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mi-lantuhns don't come out of marshes, but out of graveyards, and stun drowning folk, and then suck out their blood and leave them as dry as husks ; that kind of Wuller-Wups are the worst, because they grow from sucking the life out of creatures till they are as tall as big cotton-wood trees, and the creatures they have sucked to death get up and go on in the same business, and they too grow and grow, appearing in fiery shape, but all their life is on the outside, and their hearts are as cold as death" (p. 280). The last touch seems peculiarly horrible, and their malignant vampire-like habits have no counterpart in English folklore, but must be due to African imagination. I do not know whether any Will-o'-the-wisp conceptions and stories are current amongst the Red Indians.

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#### THE IRISH MIRABILIA IN THE NORSE "SPECULUM REGALE".

BY KUNO MEYER.

*Kongs Skuggsjo*, or *Speculum Regale*, is the title of an old Norse book written about 1250 A.D.<sup>1</sup> An outline of its contents is as follows.

In an introduction the writer says that, anxious for instruction and advice on various matters pertaining to the proper conduct of life, he applied to his wise and kind father, who gave him full answers to all his questions. The son was then asked by several distinguished and learned men, who had been present at these conversations, to put them all in writing. He did so, and called his book *Speculum Regale*, not boastfully, but because it was to be as a mirror to men, and because, among other things, rules for the conduct of kings are set forth therein. Lastly, he says that for the reader or hearer of the book it is not

<sup>1</sup> See Vigfusson and Powell, *Icelandic Prose Reader*, p. 425. I have used the editions of Halfdan Einarson, 1768, and of Oscar Brenner, Munich, 1881.

necessary to know the writer's name and rank, lest from animosity, envy, or enmity towards the author, he should despise whatever useful things may be found in the book.

The book then takes the form of a dialogue between the father and son, and begins in this way :—


*The Son* : ' Good-day, sir. I have come to see you as it behoves an obedient and humble son to approach a loving and distinguished father, and I desire to ask you to have patience in listening to my questions and kindness in answering them.'

*The Father* : ' Since thou art my only son, it pleases me well that thou shouldst often come to see me, for we have many things to talk about, and I promise thee that I shall willingly listen to thy questions, and answer whatever thou mayst reasonably ask me.'

*The Son* : ' I have heard that common report, which I believe to be true, says that there are few wiser men in this land than you. Besides, you have spent your life with kings, and are an authority on questions of government and of law. Now, as I am to be the heir of your worldly possessions, I should also like to become the heir of your wisdom ; wherefore I would ask you to impart to me, as it were, the alphabet or elements of knowledge, so that I may benefit by your further instruction and follow in your footsteps.'


Thereupon the father, though he says he has been rather a king's man than a merchant, enlarges in the first place upon the duties of a merchant, on integrity, knowledge of law and of languages, bringing up of children, intercourse with men and with princes, rules of navigation, investment of capital, the times of day, the course of the sun, winds, seasons, moon, and tide, summer and winter in northern Norway. He then dwells on the thankless task of relating 'wonders' of distant lands such as India, and generally objects to speaking about things which he has not seen with his own eyes, or heard of himself. Accordingly, he proceeds to mention some wonderful things which may be



found in Norway itself, such as snow-shoes, and a lake which turns wood into stone. 

But here the patience of the son is exhausted, and he interrupts his father by saying: 'These things are all known to me, as they are in this country, and I have seen them all. I should like to hear of Iceland, Greenland, and Ireland.'

The father then, without further objection, begins to speak of Iceland, its earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, subterranean fires, springs of ale, etc.

When the father has said all he knows about Iceland, the son repeats his question as to Greenland and Ireland, and then follows the section on Ireland, with which I propose to deal more particularly, and which I will translate *in extenso*. It will be seen that most of the stories told about Ireland are of the character of *Mirabilia*. Now, our two main sources of Irish *Mirabilia* are the Irish collections of such stories, most of which have been edited by Todd, in his edition of the *Irish Nennius*, pp. 192-219, and the *Topographia Hibernia* of Giraldus Cambrensis. A priori there is no reason why our Norse author should not have been acquainted with either of these, or should not have taken his materials from either of them. For Giraldus brought out his book in 1188, and of some at least of the Irish *Mirabilia* there existed Latin translations as early as the ninth century (*Nennius*). We shall see how far our author's treatment of the subject favours such an hypothesis. 

Having mentioned that both Iceland and Greenland are such poor and wretched countries that they may hardly be inhabited, the father proceeds:

1. "Ireland, on the other hand, is almost the best of lands<sup>1</sup> that men know, though wine does not grow there.<sup>2</sup> And

<sup>1</sup> *Ni bia co airther in domuin inis bus fherr*, 'There shall be no better island as far as the east of the world,' says the woman Eriu to the sons of Míl (the Milesians), *LL*. p. 13a.

<sup>2</sup> *Gir.* i, 6: *Pascuis et pratis, melle et lacte, vinis, non vineis, dives est insula*.

there are many things in it that must seem wonderful, and for some of these the land must be called holier than other lands.

2. It lies in that part of the world where both heat and cold are so well tempered that it never grows too hot nor too cold there. There is never too much heat there to be harmful in summer, nor too much cold to be harmful in winter, so that in every winter all cattle graze outside, both sheep and neat; and men are there almost without clothes both winter and summer.

3. Again, that land is so holy beyond other lands, that no venomous creature may thrive therein, neither snakes nor toads, and though such be carried thither from other lands, they die at once as soon as they touch the bare earth or stone. And if anything be taken out of that land, either wood or earth or sand, and carried into other lands where venomous creatures are, and if with that sand or earth a ring be formed around them where they lie, then they never after come out of that ring, but lie therein all dead. Likewise, if you take wood which comes out of the land about which we now speak, and draw it in a circle around them, so that you mark the earth with the wood, then they all lie dead within that ring.

*Ir. Nenn.* p. 219: 'There live no toads nor snakes nor dragons<sup>1</sup> in all Ireland, and even though they be brought from other places into it, they die immediately; and this has been tested. Except the mouse, the wolf, and the fox, there has not been, and there shall not be any noxious animal in it.' Cf. also Stokes, *Trip. Life*, p. xxix. This freedom from venomous creatures is now popularly ascribed to the prayers of St. Patrick. None of his biographies, however, except that of Jocelin (A.D. 1120), mention such an incident, nor have I ever found it mentioned in other native sources. It is probable that the expulsion of venomous creatures from Ireland was first ascribed to St. Patrick by the

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<sup>1</sup> Todd omits *nó dracoin* in his Irish text, and 'nor dragons' in his translation.

Norse, through a popular interpretation of his name as *Pad-rekr*, 'toad-expeller', from *pad*, 'toad', and *reka*, 'to expel'.<sup>1</sup>—*Gir.* i, 28 and 29.

4. This is also said about Ireland, that no other island of its size contains an equally large number of holy men.

5. This is also said, that the people who inhabit that land are both fierce among themselves and bloodthirsty and very savage ; but however bloodthirsty they are, and however many holy men there are in their land, they never slew one of them, and all these holy men that there are have died through sickness ; because they that are fierce among themselves have ever been kindly towards all good men and holy.

*Solin.* 22, 3 : '*Gens inhospita et bellicosa. Sanguine interemptorum hausto prius victores vultus suos oblinunt. Fas ac nefas eodem loco ducunt.*' Giraldu's remarks on the character of the Irish are well known. The curious statement that in spite of this temper of the inhabitants there were no Irish martyrs, is also in Giraldu (iii, 31), where see also the spirited retort of the Archbishop of Cashel to Giraldu's sneering remark. That there were no Irish martyrs is, of course, not correct, though certainly out of the large number of Irish saints very few are stated to have suffered martyrdom.

6. There is also a certain lake in that land, about the nature of which a wonder is told. That lake is called in their tongue *Loch Echach* (Lough Neagh). That lake is very large in size. And this is the nature of that water. If you take the wood that some call *beinwið*, and some *hulfr* (holly), and which in Latin is called *acrifolium*, and you place it in the water so that some of it stands in the earth below, and some in the water, and some up out of the water, then that which stands in the earth below turns into iron, and that which is in the water into stone, and the wood

<sup>1</sup> In the *Leabhar Breac* Life of St. Columba (Stokes, *Three Irish Homilies*, p. 121) that saint is said to have banished toads and snakes out of Iona.

that stands out of the water remains as it was. But if you take wood of another kind than this, it does not change its nature, though you place it in this water.

This is the second wonder in Todd (p. 195), but told somewhat differently and with the addition that the wood must be seven years in the water.—*Nennius*, § 76.—Not in Giraldus.—There are several lakes called *Loch Cuilinn* (Holly-lake) in Ireland. See *Oss. Soc.* vi, p. 120.

7. There are also two springs in the mountain that is called *Bladma* (Slieve Bloom), which is almost a waste, and those springs have a wonderful nature. The one spring has this nature, if you take either a white sheep or a neat or a horse or a man that has white hair, and you bathe any one of these in that water, they become forthwith coal-black. And this is the nature of the other spring, if a man washes himself therein, whatsoever colour he has, whether he was red or white or black, then he becomes snow-white of hair, as if he were an old man.

Both the Irish *Mirabilia* (p. 197) and Giraldus (ii, 7) tell quite a different wonder of a well in Slieve Bloom. But cf. the wonder of the well Galloon, co. Monaghan (Todd, p. 195), and of a well in Munster (Gir. ii, 7) which turns human hair grey.

8. There is also a lake in that land, which they call *Loghica* (?) in their tongue. In this lake is a small islet, as if it were a floating isle. It floats about the water and comes sometimes so close to the land that a man may step on to it. And that happens most often on the Lord's days. And this is the nature of that islet: if the man who steps on it is sick, whatever disease he may have, and he eats of the grass that grows on the islet, then he is cured at once. It is also part of its nature that no more ever get on to it at the same time than one, though many wish it, because the islet at once floats from the land when one man has got on to it. This nature also the islet has, that it floats for six years together in that lake; and as soon as the six years are gone, then it floats to land at some place,

and grows with the other land, as if it had always been with it. And when that time comes, then it sounds to men as if a great din came, like a thunderclap, and after, when the thunder has gone, men see such another islet in the water as before there was, of the same size and the same nature. And so it happens every seventh year after another, that as soon as one islet grows with the mainland, then comes another, and yet no one knows whence it comes.

I do not know which lake is meant by *Loghica*. There is nothing either in the Irish *Mirabilia* or in Giraldus at all like this story. But Giraldus tells a similar story of one of the lakes on Snowdon, and in a seventeenth-century *Memorial of the most rare and wonderfull things in Scotland*, by John Monipennie,<sup>1</sup> I find the following :—‘In Lennox is a great loch, called Loch Lowmond, 24 miles in length, and in bredth 8 miles, containing the number of 30 isles. In this loch is observed 3 wonderfull things . . . the 3rd is one of these isles that is not corroborat, nor united to the ground, but hath beene perpetually loose ; and although it bee fertill of good grasse, and replenished with neate, yet it mooves by the waves of the water, and is transported some times towards one point, and otherwhiles towards another.’

9. Then there is also a small island in that land, which in their tongue is called *Inhisgluer* (Inishglory). There is a large settlement of men in that island, and there is a church in it, because there are as many people in the island as a parish must have. And though men die there, they are not buried in the earth, but they are raised up round about the church in the churchyard, and stand upright like living men with all their limbs all dried, and all their hair and nails unscathed, and they never decay, and birds never perch on them. And in that way anyone that lives afterwards may there recognise his father or his father's father, and all his race, from whom he is descended.

<sup>1</sup> Printed at Brittaines Bursse, by John Budge, 1612. Reprinted 1820, Glasgow, in the *Miscellanea Scotica*, vol. i, pp. 198-202.



This is the first wonder in Todd, p. 193, but the standing corpses are not mentioned. Gir. ii, 6, tells the same wonder of Arann.

10. There is also a large water, which is called *Logri* (Loch Ree). And in that water lies a small island, in which are men of pure life whom one may call what he likes, either *canonici* or hermits. And they are in such great numbers that there is a full convent of them. Sometimes they are more numerous. And of that island it is told that it is wholesome and not visited by diseases, and men grow old later there than in other places on the mainland. And as soon as men grow so old, or sicken, so that they see the day of their end appointed by God, then they have to be moved out of it to some place on the land where they may die. For nobody may in that island lose his life from illness; though men may sicken in it, yet they die not before they are removed out of it.

I do not know which island in Loch Ree is meant. Nothing exactly like this is found in Todd. The 31st wonder (p. 217) comes nearest to it: 'The island of Loch Cré . . no sinner can die on it, and no power can bury him in it.' Gir. ii, 4, has a short remark about an 'insula viventium', where no one can die a natural death, and which he places on a lake in North Munster which would do for Loch Cré.

11. There is also a large lake, which in their tongue they call *Loghærne* (Lough Erne). In that lake are a great quantity of that kind of fish which men call salmon, and that fish goes in such numbers round their whole land that they have more than enough for their sustenance.

Cf. Gir. ii, 9.

12. There are also many islands in that lake, and one of them in their tongue they call *Kertinagh*. That island would be suitable to inhabit for many reasons, if men durst inhabit it. But it is related about this island that devils have as great power over one half of it as in hell itself. And at those times when daring men have done it

for trial, then have they afterwards said that they have suffered there as many pains and torments as is told that souls suffer in hell. But in the other half of the island there is a church and a churchyard around it, and both halves are now deserted. And it is said that over that half of the island in which the church stands the devils have no power.

Not mentioned in the Irish *Mirabilia*. Cf. Gir. ii, 5, who does not mention the name of the lake nor of the island. I do not know which island is meant by Kertinagh.

13. There also happens in this land what must seem very wonderful, that men have caught in a wood a certain animal, of which no man could say whether it was a man or a beast, because men have not heard speech from it, nor did they observe that it understood the speech of men. ~~And yet it was grown in all things like a man, both with hands and feet and a man's face,~~ save that hair grew all over its body as with other animals. And along its back there stood a mane as on a horse, which fell down on both sides, so that it dragged on the earth whenever the creature stooped down.

Gir. ii, 21: 'The half-ox man' (?). Nothing like this in Todd.

I think now that I have mentioned most of those things that are there of the nature of the land itself, and of which men think that they are true. Yet there are some other wonderful things which are not of the nature of the land, but of the miracles of holy and wise men, which we know for certain to be true. Some things there are, of which we do not know for certain whether they are true or not, otherwise than from the talk of men, and that they are in general report there in the land. But the following things we know to be certainly true.

Q of TRUTH

14. In that lake which we mentioned before, and which is called *Loghri* (Loch Ree), there lies a small island called *Iniscloedran*. There was a holy man who was called Diermicus, and he had there a church for himself, where he

had his seat. And into the church or the churchyard of which he is the patron, no female creature may enter ; and they all know that, yea both birds and other creatures that are without human reason know this just as men, and no female animal tries to enter that churchyard, and none succeeds though it try.

The Ir. *Mir.* (p. 217) tell this of an island on Loch Cré (cf. § 10, above), and Gir. (ii, 4) of a lake in Munster. But the *Martyrology of Donegal*, p. 400, has this entry : 'Diarmait, bishop of Inis Clothrann on Loch Ree in Cuircne. And no woman or young female child can touch his churchyard. And a Saxon heretic woman who violated it cried out and died immediately.' Here, then, the Norse version offers a combination or confusion of two different Irish stories, one relating to Diarmait's churchyard in Inis Clothrann, the other relating to an island on Loch Cré.

15. There was also in that land a holy man called **Kewinus**, in that place which is called *Glinnelaga* (Glen-dalough). And he was as it were a hermit, and in his time this event happened of which we will now tell. It so befel that he had with him a young man, a kinsman of his, who served him, and he was very fond of the lad. This lad began to sicken before him, and his illness became so heavy and great that he expected to die. That was in the time **about spring in the month of March, when the diseases of man become sorest**. And then it so happened that the lad asked of Kewinus, his kinsman, that he should give him apples, and said that his illness would grow less if he got what he asked him. And there was no likelihood at that time of getting apples, because on all the fruit-trees the buds were then first beginning to sprout into leaves. But because the holy Kewinus was much grieved at the sickness of his kinsman, and because he was unable to procure what he asked, he began to pray and asked God that he might send him such things from which his kinsman might derive comfort as he desired. And when he

SEASON

had ended his prayer, he went out and sat down a short distance from his house. There stood a large-sized willow-tree. He looked up into the branches of the tree as if expecting mercy and some comfort from there. Then at once he saw that apples had grown on that willow as if it were on an apple-tree in its proper time, and he took from it the three apples and brought them to the lad. When the lad had eaten of those apples, his disease began to lessen, and he was cured. And that willow-tree has ever since retained the gift which God gave to it then; for in every year it bears apples like an apple-tree, and these have ever since been called 'Saint Kevin's apples'. And they are taken throughout all Ireland so that men may eat thereof if they fall ill, and they seem to get relief thereby. These apples are good for all diseases of men, though they are not desirable to eat for the sake of sweetness.

CHES

Gir. ii, 28. Not in the Ir. *Mir.* An alder-tree, which the celebrated Bishop of Cashel, Cormac mac Cuilennain, planted in Inishcaltra, is said to have borne apples.<sup>1</sup> Nennius (§ 70) tells of an ash-tree near the mouth of the Wye bearing apples.

Hitherto we have mentioned those things only which were done through holiness, and which remain to-day as witnesses of the event, and seem as wonderful now as on the first day when they were done. Yet there are other things which men hold certainly for true, and which we may now also show forth.

16. There is also in that land the place which is called *Themer* (Tara), and that place was once as it were the chief seat and king's castle; yet it is now deserted, because men dare not inhabit it. And the cause why that place became deserted is this. All the people of the land believed that the king who sat in that place would always give right judgments and none other. And though they

<sup>1</sup> *Harl.* 5280, fo. 42: Cormac mac Cuilennain is e tuc in fernoc co hlniss Celtra corusclandustair a richd abla hi ocus dorinde Dia *fer*ta fair-siomh corofasatar ubla fuirre amail cech n-abail n-aili.

were heathen in other respects, and had no true faith in God, yet they had this belief so steadfastly, that they thought that whatever the king judged was rightly judged, and never thought that wrong judgment should be given from that king's seat. Now, where the height of the hill seemed to be, there the king had a fair castle and well made. In that castle the king had a fair and large hall, such as it behoved him to sit in as a judge of men. But once it so happened that matters came before the king to be tried, in which were his friends on one side, whose cause the king greatly favoured, and on the other his enemies. And thus it happened that the king inclined his judgment more after his pleasure than according to justice. And when, against all expectation, false judgment had come where people thought that right judgment should be, the tribunal, the palace and castle, and the whole place, were overthrown and collapsed. And thus it has remained ever since. And on account of this great miracle neither kings nor other inhabitants dare to dwell in that place, which otherwise is the most pleasant of all. And it is also said that if anyone dare to inhabit that place, a new prodigy happens daily.

Not in the Ir. *Mir.* nor in Giraldus. Nor does it tally very well with the traditional Irish account, according to which Tara was deserted in 565 after the death of King Dermot mac Cerbaill, in consequence of the curse of St. Ruadan. See Petrie's *Tara*, p. 125; O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, ii, p. 83.

17. There is also in that land one wonderful thing, which will seem very untruthful to men. Yet the people who inhabit that land say that it is certainly true. And that befell on account of the wrath of a holy man. It is said that when the holy Patricius was preaching Christianity in that land, there was one great race more hostile to him than the other people that were in the land. And those men tried to do him many kinds of injury. And when he preached Christianity to them as to other men,

and came to meet them when they were holding their assembly, then they took this counsel, to howl at him like wolves. But when he saw that his message would succeed little with these people, then he became very wroth, and prayed God that He might avenge it on them by some judgment, that their descendants might for ever remember their disobedience. And great punishment and fit and very wonderful has since befallen their descendants ; for it is said that all men who come from that race are always wolves at a certain time, and run into the woods and have food like wolves ; and they are worse in this that they have human reason, for all their cunning, and such desire and greed for men as for other creatures. And it is said that some become so every seventh year, and are men during the interval. And some have it so long that they have seven years at once, and are never so afterwards.

Giraldus (ii, 19) has a similar story of one man and woman, who had been cursed by St. Naal or Natalis. Ir. *Mir.* p. 205 : 'The descendants of the wolf in Ossory,' etc. ; but neither the curse nor the seven years are mentioned.

18. There is also one thing, which will seem very wonderful, about men who are called *gelt*. It happens when two hosts meet and are arranged in battle-array, and when the battle-cry is raised loudly on both sides, that cowardly men run wild, and lose their wits from the dread and fear which seize them. And then they run into a wood away from other men, and live there like beasts, and shun the meeting of men like wild beasts. And it is said of these men that when they have lived in the woods in that condition for twenty years, then feathers grow on their bodies as on birds, whereby their bodies are protected against frost or cold ; but the feathers are not so large that they may fly like birds. Yet their swiftness is said to be so great that other men cannot approach them, and greyhounds just as little as men. For these people run along the trees almost as swiftly as monkeys or squirrels.

Vito.  
Merlin

Not in the Ir. *Mir.* nor Giraldus. But this effect of the panic of battle on men is a very common feature in Irish story. See the *Battle of Ventry*, l. 313; *Three Fragments*, p. 40; *Four Masters*, A.D. 718 = *Chron. Scot.* p. 122, where *uolatiles* is glossed by *gealta*, the plural of *geilt*, 'madman, lunatic.' The Norse phrase *verða at gjalti* seems to have nothing to do originally with *göltr*, 'a boar', but to have been fashioned from the Irish word.

19. There is yet another thing that will seem most wonderful, which happened in the city that is called *Cloena* (Clonmacnoise). In that city is a church which is sacred to the memory of the holy man who is called *Kiranus*. And there it thus befell on a Sunday, when people were at church and were hearing Mass, there came dropping from the air above an anchor, as if it were cast from a ship, for there was a rope attached to it. And the fluke of the anchor got hooked in an arch at the church door, and all the people went out of the church and wondered, and looked upwards after the rope. They saw a ship float on the rope, and men in it. And next they saw a man leap overboard from the ship, and dive down towards the anchor, wanting to loosen it. His exertion seemed to them, by the movement of his hands and feet, like that of a man swimming in the sea. And when he came down to the anchor, he endeavoured to loosen it. And then some men ran towards him and wanted to seize him. But in the church, to which the anchor was fastened, there is a bishop's chair. The bishop was by chance on the spot, and he forbade the men to hold that man, for he said that he would die as if he were held in water. And as soon as he was free he hastened his way up again to the ship; and as soon as he came up, they cut the rope, and then sailed on their way out of the sight of men. And the anchor has ever since lain as a witness of the event in that church.

AIR  
SHIP

This is the 23rd wonder in the Ir. *Mir.* (p. 211), which, as it is not quite correctly translated by Todd, I will give *in extenso*.—

'Congalach, son of Maelmithig (+ 956), was at the fair of Teltown on a certain day, when he saw a ship (sailing) along in the air. One of the crew cast a dart at a salmon. The dart fell down in the presence of the gathering, and a man came out of the ship after it. When he seized its end from above, a man from below seized it from below. Upon which the man from above said: "I am being drowned," said he. "Let him go," said Congalach; and he is allowed to go up, and then he goes from them swimming.' In the *Book of Leinster*, p. 274a, 37, the appearance of three ships in the air is mentioned as one of the wonders of Teltown, when King Domnall mac Murchada (A.D. 763) was at the fair, which agrees with an entry in the *Annals, LL.* p. 25b, 3: 'Naues in aere uisae sunt.' Not in Giraldus.

20. I think we have now mentioned nearly all those things that are most necessary to mention about this land. Yet there is one thing more behind which we may mention, if you like, for the sake of sport and merriment. A certain merry-man there was in that land long ago, and yet he was a Christian. And that man was called *Klefsan* by name. It was said of this man that no one he saw he would not make laugh with his merry words, even though they were dying. And though a man were sad in his thought, yet it is said that he could not refrain from laughing if he heard the talk of that man. And he fell ill and died, and was then buried in the churchyard like other men. He lay in the earth a long time, so that all the flesh was decayed from his bones, and most bones had decayed with it. Then it happened that some bodies were being buried in the same churchyard, and they were digging so near the place where *Klefsan* was buried, that they dug up his skull, which was whole. And they placed it afterwards up on a high stone in the churchyard, and it has stood there ever since. And whoever comes there and sees and looks at the place where his mouth was and his tongue, then laughs he forthwith, even though he was in a sad mood before he saw the head. And his dead bones now make little fewer people laugh than when he was alive.

YORRICK!



There is nothing like this either in the Ir. *Mir.* or in Giraldus. But we may compare the story about the grave of the jester Mac Rustaing at Russagh, which no woman can see without laughing or breaking wind (Ir. *Mir.* p. 201 = *Félire*, p. cxlv); and the story of the talking head of Donnób in *Three Fragments*, p. 45. *Cleisan* I take to be miswritten for *Clessán*, a hypocoristic form of some name the first part of which was *cless*, 'feat, trick,' an appropriate name for a jester.

I do not know any more things in this land that seem suitable to me to speak about any longer."

Having thus said all he has to say about Ireland, our author goes on to speak of Greenland, the natural phenomena to be seen there, its sea-monsters, climatic conditions, the northern light, etc. Then ends the first part of the book. The second part deals entirely with questions of manners and morality, mostly with reference to kings and court life, and with various religious and scholastic problems, and does not concern us here. In this second part the story of Tara's desertion is told once more, but without the addition of any new features.

It will hardly be necessary for me to show at greater length that the idea of our author having used either Giraldus or a version of the Irish *Mirabilia* cannot be entertained. The Norse account hardly ever tallies with either of them; it sometimes agrees with Irish native accounts against Giraldus, and it contains several stories to be found neither in Giraldus nor in the *Mirabilia*, but known to us from other Irish sources. It might be argued, of course, that our author drew from some other source, not now accessible to us, but I do not think that his narrative anywhere contains the slightest indication of dependence on any authority except that of oral and local tradition. However, the most conclusive evidence as to this being our author's source remains yet to be mentioned. It is that offered by the shape in which the Irish names of places and persons appear. These names, though more or

less corrupted by the scribes of the various MSS., are, with a few exceptions, all of them Norse phonetic renderings of spoken Irish of the thirteenth century. They are not based upon written forms, either Irish or Latin. The following comparisons will show this :

*Bladma* (miswritten *Bladina*) is the Irish *Bladma* in *Sliab Bladma*, now Slieve Bloom, where Norse *ð* represents Irish infected *d*, as in *Maddaðr* = Ir. *Maddadh* ; see Stokes, *Revue Celtique*, iii, p. 189.

*Logheehag* is miswritten, I think, for *Loghechag* or *Lognechag* = Ir. *Loch n-Echach*, now Lough Neagh, *g* standing for the guttural *ch*, as in *Logri* = *Loch Ribh*, now Lough Ree, where the final *bh* is silent.

*Loghaerne*, perhaps miswritten for *Lognaerne* = *Loch n'Eirne*, now Lough Erne.

*Glannelaga* (miswritten *Glumelaga*) is the oblique case of the Ir. *Glenn-dá-locha* or *-lacha*, now Glendalough, showing *g* for the guttural *ch*, and preserving the final *a* of the genitive dual.

*Inhisgluer*, perhaps for *Innisgluere* = Ir. *Inis Glúaire*.

*Imisclo dran* = Ir. *Inis Clothrann*.

*Cloena*, perhaps for *Cluen* = *Clúain* (*maccunoise*).

*Temere*, corruptly *Tem* in one place, where the ending has been omitted through *er*, 'is', following immediately upon it, = Ir. *Temraig*, the oblique case of *Temair*, 'Tara'. The infected final *g* is silent, but whether in this case *m* is historical spelling, or is to denote the nasal quality of the preceding vowel, I cannot say. The medial *e* looks like an irrational vowel developed between two consonants.

*Loghica* (miswritten *Loycha* in one MS.) and *Kertinagh* I cannot explain ; *Kewinus* is the Latinised form of Ir. *Caimhghin*, *w* being used to render the sound of *mh*, after which the *gh* is silent. *Clefsan* for *Clessan* I have explained above.

My conclusion, then, shortly is this. The account of Ireland in the *Speculum Regale* is not derived from any written sources, but entirely based upon oral information

obtained in Ireland itself. In this respect it is interesting to observe that all the 'wonders', with the exception of that of Inishglory, are localised in the east of Ireland. Thus this Norse version of Irish stories furnishes interesting examples of the peculiar characteristics attaching to all merely oral tradition, such as confusion of names, substitution of different details, different localisation, different working out of the same motive, etc. But on the whole the stories have in their Norse dress well preserved some peculiarly Irish features, such as the wild grotesqueness in the story of Clessan's skull, or the natural magic in that of the ships in the air.

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#### LEGENDS FROM THE WOODLARKS, BRITISH NEW GUINEA.

BY A. C. HADDON.

Having recently had occasion to consult a number of references to British New Guinea, I have come across the following legends, which may interest some of our readers as they come from a part of the world about which little is known.

The Woodlarks, the largest of which is called Murua, are a group of islands lying about 150 miles north-east of the south-eastern extremity of New Guinea. They have recently been visited and described by Sir William Macgregor, the Administrator of British New Guinea; a clue to the literature on the group will be found in my forthcoming paper, "The Decorative Art of British New Guinea: a Study in Papuan Ethnography." Cunningham, Memoir X., Royal Irish Academy. The first three legends are recorded by R. P. Montrouzier, Provicaire Apostolique de la Société de Marie, from "Ile Woodlark", 18 Janvier, 1849, *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xxiii, 1851. On p. 369 he writes, "You can judge by this mythological sketch if you wish to know what superstitious prejudices we have